

Spring 4-13-2014

Junior Recital: Richard Michi, baritone

Lehigh University Music Department

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Lehigh University Music Department
2013-2014 Season



Baker Hall Zoellner Arts Center
www.lehigh.edu/music
 *LU MusicDept*

Lehigh University Music Department presents

Junior Recitalist

Richard Michi,
baritone

with

Susan Frickert,
piano

Sunday, April 13, 2014

4:30 pm

Baker Hall

Zoellner Arts Center

Michi recital 4-13-14

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PROGRAM

Richard Michi, Baritone

Susan Frickert, Piano

Sunday, April 13, 2014, 4:30 PM

“Sì, trai ceppi,” from *Berenice*

George Frideric Handel
(1685-1759)

Chanson d'Avril

Georges Bizet
(1838-1875)

Wie bist du, meine Königin

Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897)

“Deh, vieni alla finestra,”
from *Don Giovanni*

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756-1791)

Après un rêve

Gabriel Fauré
(1845-1924)

O Mistress Mine

Roger Quilter
(1877-1953)

Fischerweise

Franz Schubert
(1797-1828)

Whither Must I Wander?

Ralph Vaughan Williams
(1872-1958)

“Once Upon a Time,” from *All American*

Charles Strouse
(b. 1928)

PROGRAM NOTES

George Frideric Handel: "Si, tra i ceppi"

Handel composed dozens of operas during his lifetime in Germany, Italy, and England. After Handel settled in England in 1712, his operas and oratorios became quite popular among the English people. Unfortunately, *Berenice, regina d'Egitto* did not share in the success of his other works. *Berenice* premiered on May 18, 1737 at the Covent Garden Theatre in London. It was performed only four times before disappearing from the theatre landscape. Its failure has mostly been attributed to fading British interest in Italian opera and the competition between Covent Garden Theatre and a rival Italian opera company at King's Theatre. Despite its failure, however, some of the music from the opera has endured.

"Si, tra i ceppi" remains one of the more popular arias surviving from the opera. It is sung by the character Demetrio in the second act. Berenice, the queen of Egypt, is betrothed to Demetrio. However, it is revealed that Demetrio is in fact in love with Berenice's sister Selene, and is involved in a plot to overthrow the queen. Upon learning this, an enraged Berenice orders him thrown in jail and tortured. When brought before the queen, Demetrio responds with this aria. It is both an act of defiance towards Berenice and an affirmation of his love for Selene.

The aria is divided into three sections. The first and third are set in a major key and are an optimistic and confident affirmation of Demetrio's faith in his love for Selene. The middle section's minor key reflects the idea of death, but Demetrio resolves that not even death in bondage will extinguish his love. The piece has an almost heroic quality, emphasized by the periodic melismas. The repetition of the first section is often performed with embellishments, a standard practice in Baroque opera.

Georges Bizet: "Chanson d'Avril"

Bizet is best known for his operatic works, the most popular being *Carmen*. As a result, many of his other compositions are often overlooked. He wrote about two dozen French art songs between 1866 and 1868. Many are dramatic pieces, reflecting his works for

the stage. In fact, several of his songs were taken from unfinished operas.

"Chanson d'Avril" was written in 1866, and the text is a setting of the poetry of Louis Bouilhet. The piano accompaniment is steady, but its consistent pulsing portrays the anticipation of spring outlined in the text. The vocal line is rather simple, but cleverly portrays the dramatic and beautiful nature of springtime. There is a palpable excitement in the music about leaving the cold winter months behind.

Johannes Brahms: "Wie bist du, meine Königin"

Brahms was a prolific composer of German Lieder, or art songs. He composed 190 pieces for solo voice and dozens of other pieces for vocal ensembles. "Wie bist du, meine Königin" is the final song in Brahms's Nine Songs, op. 32, first published in 1864. The piece was set to the words of poet Georg Friedrich Daumer. Each of the pieces in this opus deal with separation between lovers paired with longing and admiration, unfortunate and recurring themes in Brahms's personal life. The text of "Wie bist du" deals predominately with love and admiration.

The legato melody of "Wie bist du" evokes a sense of warmth and affection. Each of the four verses starts out quietly, opens into a gradual crescendo, and ends with a musical sigh on "wonnevoll" ("blissful"). The sequence of each phrase evokes tenderness, which turns into elation and then bittersweet reminiscence of love. The third verse immediately begins with a darker tone as the concept of death is introduced. By the end of the verse, the melody has resolved into the major key of the rest of the piece. After a striking climax in the fourth verse, we learn that even in agony and death, love retains a sweet tenderness.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: "Deh, vieni alla finestra"

The story of Don Juan, legendary womanizer, has been told many times by many different people. One of the most popular renditions of the story is Mozart's opera *Don Giovanni*. It premiered at the Teatro di Praga in Prague on October 29, 1787, and became wildly popular. It remains one of the most widely performed operas today.

"Deh, vieni alla finestra" is sung during the second act of the opera. Don Giovanni, embodying the legend of Don Juan, is attempting to seduce a maid. Disguised as his servant Leporello, Giovanni stands beneath the maid's window and serenades her with this aria. As he begs her to "come to the window" he provides accompaniment with his mandolin. The melody is both tender and playful, qualities reflected by quickly moving sixteenth notes in the accompaniment.

Gabriel Fauré: "Après un rêve"

Gabriel Fauré is widely recognized as one of the most influential French composers of his generation. Many of his works are said to link the end of Romanticism to the Modernism of the early twentieth century. Fauré composed music for opera, piano, and orchestra, but he is perhaps best known as the master of French art song, or *mélodie*. Fellow French composer Maurice Ravel once commented that he had saved the French art song from being overrun by the German Lied, which was much more popular at the time. He wrote over 100 pieces for voice and piano, and his melodies were often considered to be individualistic and exceptionally free-flowing.

"Après un rêve" was written early in Faure's career (around 1878) and remains one of his most popular songs. It was composed around the time when his engagement to Marianne Viardot was abruptly ended. The suddenness of this event may have compelled Fauré to write this piece. The text describes two lovers meeting in a blissful dream, then reveals the agony upon waking and being torn from the world of dreams. The piano accompaniment provides a steady pulse throughout, creating the basis for a haunting melody that rises above it. The piece ends with a futile cry for the night to return, leaving the lover isolated and alone.

Roger Quilter: "O Mistress Mine"

Roger Quilter composed dozens of English art songs, and his melodies have become standards in the vocal repertoire. This piece is a selection from Quilter's *Three Shakespeare Songs*, op. 6. The music was set to the ballad "O Mistress Mine," which appears in Shakespeare's comedy *Twelfth Night*.

This piece features a lively accompaniment and an equally

energetic melody, giving it a lighthearted and flirtatious quality. The rapidly rising and falling lines illustrate that youthful and vibrant love often passes by much too quickly, and that "Youth's a stuff will not endure."

Franz Schubert: "Fischerweise"

In a life spanning just thirty-one years, Franz Schubert composed over 600 Lieder and many other instrumental works, an incredible feat. During his life, Schubert was best known for his songs, many of which portrayed daily life and nature. "Fischerweise" ("Fisherman's Song") was written in 1826 and is the fourth song in Schubert's op. 96.

"Fischerweise" talks about the daily life of the fisherman, and tells us that his life is one free of worry and care. The piece starts with a lively accompaniment, perhaps reflecting the rolling waves of the ocean. The playful eighth-note figure introduced within the first few bars of the accompaniment occurs several times throughout and is often exchanged between the voice and piano. This figure is perhaps most successful at expressing the simple and cheerful life of the fisherman.

Ralph Vaughan Williams: "Whither Must I Wander"

This piece is an excerpt from Vaughan Williams's song cycle *Songs of Travel*, written between 1901 and 1904. The texts of each piece come from a compilation of poems of the same name, written by Robert Louis Stevenson. This cycle was one of Vaughan Williams's first attempts at writing music for solo voice, yet it is one of the most popular of his vocal works today. *Songs of Travel* tells the story of a wayfarer who has left his home to seek renewal.

"Whither Must I Wander" is the seventh song in the cycle, and is mostly a reminiscent piece. The traveler recollects the simpler days when he was among the familiar and comforting company of family. The melody is simple, yet conveys a sense of home and the peace that comes with it. When coupled with the dramatic accompaniment, the piece becomes a moving and affectionate look at the traveler's past.

Charles Strouse: "Once Upon a Time"

"Once Upon a Time" comes from the Broadway musical *All American*, which debuted in March of 1962. It is widely considered the show's most popular song. Featuring Ray Bolger as the lead character Professor Fodorski, the show ran for eighty performances before disappearing from the Broadway stage. The plot centers on an Eastern-European engineering professor (Fodorski) moving to a small American college whose students are much more interested in football than in academics. By applying engineering principles to football, Fodorski is able to get through to the students while improving the football team at the same time. The musical also tells the story of two romances: one between two young college students and another between Fodorski and Elizabeth, dean of the college.

"Once Upon a Time" was originally performed as a duet between Fodorski and Elizabeth in the Broadway production. In the years since, the female part has been removed, creating a male solo piece. This version has been recorded by the likes of Frank Sinatra and Bobby Darin. The song features a beautiful melody and poignant text that reminisces on love that has been lost.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Baritone **Richard Michi** is currently a junior at Lehigh University, studying Vocal Performance and Materials Science and Engineering. He has been involved in choral music for many years. While attending Northern High School in Owings, MD, Richard was a member and president of the school's Chamber Choir. He also performed in Northern's musical theatre productions of *Grease* and *Damn Yankees* in 2010 and 2011 respectively. Throughout high school, Richard participated in the Calvert County All-County, Southern Maryland Tri-County, and Maryland All-State Choruses. In 2011, he was privileged to be a member of the MENC All-Eastern Chorus, a group comprised of talented singers from the Eastern region of the United States. Richard was also a member of the high school choir at Grace Brethren Church in Owings, MD. He has toured with the YouthCUE International Chorus, a small group

of singers selected from churches across the country. The group performed in French Canada in 2010 and the Pacific Northwest in 2012. Richard was featured as a soloist on recordings for both of the tours. At Lehigh, Richard sings with the University Choir and Glee Club as a Teufel Family Vocal Arts Scholar. During high school, he studied voice with Robin Henshaw. At Lehigh, he has studied voice with Debra Field and William Burden, and is currently studying with Neal Harrelson.

Susan L. Frickert

Full-time Director of Music and Organist at St. John's United Church of Christ, Nazareth since 1999, Susan leads a continually evolving music ministry that currently includes three adult choirs, two children's choirs, numerous vocal ensembles and periodic "One-Shot" modular choirs. She also manages the church's yearly concert series and oversees its active handbell program. Susan is the Founder and Director of St. John's Sacred Voices, a fifty-voice ecumenical choir that draws singers from five counties surrounding Nazareth, with summer rehearsals that culminate each September in a performance of choral masterworks accompanied by instrumentalists. SJSV celebrated its tenth anniversary in September 2012. A professional organist and pianist since the age of fourteen, Susan has served Lutheran and U. C. C. congregations in and around the Lehigh Valley for over forty-five years. She has served as pianist in the pit orchestras of numerous Broadway show performances by area community, high school and college theatre troupes. Rehearsal accompanist for Lehigh University's Concert Choir under the direction of Dr. Steven Sametz since 2008, she toured Portugal with them in 2009. Susan also accompanies for Dolce, Lehigh's Women's Choir, under the direction of Sun Min Lee. She received her undergraduate education at Cedar Crest and Muhlenberg Colleges as a music performance major, with private piano studies with Wilbur Hollman, organ studies with Ludwig Lenel, and later graduate studies at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia. An active member of the Lehigh Valley Chapter of the American Guild of Organists since a teenager, Susan has the distinction of being one of the youngest Deans on record, having served three consecutive terms.

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- 5 at 8 pm LU Jazz Repertory Orchestra with special guest artist
- 6 at 3 pm Faculty Recital: Jee Hyun Lim, soprano: *Women in Love*
- 18 & 19 at 8 pm LU Philharmonic: *Ravel, Brahms & Walton with Cynthia Phelps, viola*
- 25 & 26 at 8 pm LU Choral Arts: *Forever Thine – Vaughan Williams, Duruflé, Sametz*

November

- 15 at 8 pm LU Jazz Ensemble, Funk Band and Combo: *Fall Concert*
- 17 at 2 pm Lehigh Student Chamber Music Ensembles
- 24 at 3 pm The Wind Ensemble at Lehigh University: *We Two*

December

- 6 at 8 pm LU Philharmonic: *Family Concert*
- 7 at 3 pm LU Philharmonic: *Family Concert*
- 8 at 4, 8 pm LU Choral Arts: *Christmas Vespers in Packer Chapel*
- 14 at 1, 4 pm *The Nutcracker* with Ballet Guild and South Side Sinfonietta
- 15 at 2 pm *The Nutcracker* with Ballet Guild and South Side Sinfonietta

January

- 19 at 3 pm The Philadelphia Brass Quintet

February

- 1 at 8 pm LU Jazz Faculty: *Tribute to Horace Silver*
- 14 & 15 at 8 pm LU Philharmonic: *Concerto Marathon*
- 22 at 8 pm NY Jazz Repertory Orchestra with Glenn Cashman
- 23 at 3 pm East Winds Quintet: *Music Through the Seasons*

March

- 15 at 8 pm LU Jazz Repertory Orchestra
- 16 at 3 pm Faculty Recital: Michael Jorgensen, violin
- 21 & 22 at 8 pm LU Choir, Glee Club and Dolce: *The Best of All Possible Worlds*
- 23 at 3 pm Faculty Recital: Eugene Albulescu, piano: *Beethoven Blockbusters*
- 29 at 8 pm LU Jazz Ensemble, Funk Band and Combo: *Spring Concert*

April

- 6 at 1 pm Lehigh Student Chamber Music Ensembles
- 6 at 3 pm Faculty Recital: Christopher Gross, cello
- 11 & 12 at 8 pm LU Philharmonic: *A Thousand and One Nights*
- 13 at 2 pm LU Symphonic Band
- 13 at 4:30 pm Junior Recital
- 25 & 26 at 8 pm LU Choral Arts: *Beethoven Masterpieces*
- 27 at 3 pm The Wind Ensemble at Lehigh University: *Classical Winds*
- 28 at 4 pm LU Music Department Awards

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Please visit our website at <http://www.lehigh.edu/music> and on Facebook at LU MusicDept and visit the Zoellner site at zoellnerartscenter.org for more information